HOLD ON TO HOLINESS

Holiness, without which no man will see God. Hebrews 12:14

Holiness is important in a Christian’s life because it is evidence of our salvation. It does not save us by any means but it displays what salvation has brought to the life of a Christian. When we see holiness we see the character of God. It is not possible to exhaust the whole conversation on holiness in a short devotion but I would like to mention a few things.

First it might be good to mention what holiness is not. J.C. Ryle says this concerning what holiness is not: “It is not knowledge—Balaam had that; nor great profession—Judas Iscariot had that; nor doing many things—Herod had that; nor zeal for certain matters in religion—Jehu had that; nor morality and outward respectability of conduct—the young ruler had that; nor taking pleasure in hearing preachers—the Jews in Ezekiel’s time had that; nor keeping company with godly people—Joab and Gehazi and Demas had that. Yet none of these were holy! These things alone are not holiness. A man may have any one of them and yet never see the Lord.”

So what is holiness? It is being one mind with God, loving what he loves and hating what he hates. Holiness is agreeing with God’s judgment. That is not always easy. Holiness is also trying to shun every known sin and keep every commandment. That too is not so easy. It is striving to be like Christ. Living as he lived and loving as he loved. The holy man crucifies the flesh, in other words, he practices self-denial. He esteems his brother higher than himself. We live in a society that seems to be all about personal gratification. To be holy would be for one to go against society in general. Holiness is being humble in the face of a “smack-talk” generation. Here is another quote from J.C. Ryle concerning the humble man. “He will understand something of Abraham’s feeling, when he says, "I am dust and ashes," and Jacob’s, when he says, "I am less than the least of all Thy mercies," and Job’s, when he says, "I am vile," and Paul’s, when he says, "I am chief of sinners." Holy Bradford, that faithful martyr of Christ, would sometimes finish his letters with these words: "A most miserable sinner, John Bradford." Good old Mr. Grimshaw’s last words, when he lay on his deathbed, were these: "Here goes an unprofitable servant." These certainly are examples of humble men. The man who is holy is one who becomes more distant to the worldly mind and more connected to the spiritual mind. His grip on the world and the things in it becomes less tight and his hold on things above becomes more firm. Sister Janice Turner sings the beautiful song “My Corner of The Field” in it the prayer to God concerning the lost is “don’t let me bruise one and don’t let me lose one in my corner of the field.” The writer certainly had his hold more on the spiritual than the worldly.

Where is your hold today? Is it on your property, your bank account, your reputation? Or is it set on winning souls, developing disciples for Christ, faithfully teaching your children and your children’s children the word, will and ways of God? Holiness does not come all at once but as a saved individual we should become more holy everyday of our lives. No it doesn’t save us but it is good evidence that we are saved. Hold on to holiness!

Yours in Christ,

Brother Randy Burtram